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Twigs, Leaves AND Blossoms.

Clifford Howard.

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Twigs, Leaves AND Blossoms.

—BY—

CLIFFORD HOWARD.

WASHINGTON, D. C.
1892.

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CONTENTS.

	Page.
A Summer Shower	5
Innocence	6
A Belated Valentine	8
Self	9
Hope's Deception	10
Music	12
Genesis	14
The Song of the River	15
Easter Morning	18
Simplicity	19
The Rose	20
The Light Departed	22
Geraldine	24
A Christmas Pæan	26
Nature's Alchemy	27
Une Chansonnette	28
The Christmas Rose	29
Love's Nocturne	30
The Daisy	31
A Reverie	32
Under the Mistletoe	33
The Candle of Mortality	34
Eventide	35
My Boy	36
Epithalamium	38
The Dream of Hope	39
Halloween	42
The Young Orpheus	43
Dolly Belle	44
Misère	46
Charity	47
Cloudland	48
Nescience	50
Delitescent	51

A Summer Shower.

SIDE by side they walk together
O'er the meadows, fields and heather
Heeding not the clouds above,
As the merry birds are singing
And the distant echoes ringing
Notes of gladness and of love.

On his lips a question hovers,
She her love with blushes covers,
As they loiter on the way;
Fast his glowing heart is beating,
Fast the precious time is fleeting,
Fainter grows the parting day.

Ere the fateful words are spoken—
Ere love's silence has been broken,—
Which would join two hearts in one,
Downward pours the threatened shower,
Sprinkling ev'ry blade and flower,
And o'ercasts the setting sun.

So the words remain unspoken
And love's silence e'er unbroken,
Leaving two hearts lone and free;
Thus has fate the potent power
Through a simple summer shower
So to change life's destiny.

Innocence.

IN bonny Scotland o'er the sea,
Upon a summer's day,
A little maid trudged merrily
Along the public way,

And for the first time in her life
This happy peasant lass
Gazed on the world beyond her home
In yonder mountain pass.

With beaming face and merry song
She tripped on t'ward the town
And reached the borough turnpike gate
Before the sun went down.

She gently tapped upon the bar,
Afraid to pass it by,
And waited patiently without
For some one to reply;

And when the good old gateman came,
With body lank and lean,
She asked, "Pray, will you tell me, sir,
Am I at Aberdeen?"

"That's where you are, my bonny lass,"
He answered with a grin;
"Then will you tell me, sir," she said,
"If Peggy is within?"

A Belated Valentine.

THOUGH many weary days have flown
Since Cupid, the invidious giver,
Assailed the heart's enchanted throne
With arrows from his magic quiver,
Upon the day of love divine
Held sacred to Saint Valentine,
When youthful hearts vow love forever,

Yet why should tokens of esteem
Be subject to the day or weather?
For often fate's mysterious scheme
Allows them not to come together;
And so, despite Saint Valentine
And custom's odd, illusive shrine,
My heart is wafted as a feather

And faintly taps upon thy door
As would a bashful, timid lover,
Afraid to wait, yet longing more
About the charmèd spot to hover,
E'er hoping that thou mayst divine
The secret of thy valentine
And thus a loving truth discover.

Self.

OWEVER good a man may be,
Or noble, brave or kind;
However great his charity
Or sacrifice designed,
He acts for self and self alone,
And not for man or friend;
To pleasure gain or pain disown,
Is but his selfish end.

Hope's Deception

How often hope's delusive art,
In bright, alluring strain,
Attempts to soothe the aching heart
And ease its mortal pain

By pointing to the morning clear
That follows mournful night,
As emblematic of the cheer
That follows sorrow's blight;

Or singing of the summer's glow
That follows winter's blast,
To prove that sorrows, like the snow,
Do not forever last.

Ah, would that hope did not deceive
With promises so fair,
For then might human hearts believe
Where now they but despair.

How oft a heart has sought relief
Within the grave's repose,
Upon whose night of bitter grief
No morning ever rose;

And many that to anguish yield
No summer ever know,
For burning tears are but congealed
In grief's perpetual snow.

Music.

TO

J. Fred Wolle.

S music naught but cold, material sound
Rung forth in euphony to please the ear?
Or may within its harmonies be found
The voice that whispers from the unknown sphere
Of life and immortality,
The soul's bright ideality?
Full oft some simple melody or chime,
As pealing from the organ, grand, sublime,
Or stealing from some plaintive voice unknown,
Or e'en a whisp'ring zephyr quickly flown,
Enthrills with ecstasy the list'ning mind,
And like a flitting phantom strangely old
There comes a vision dim and undefined,
That fills the soul with longing uncontrolled—
Some dim-remembered scene or place,
Some strange, familiar form or face,—
Entrancing now the soul's enraptured gaze
With tantalizing memories of days
Long since departed with the dreamy mist
That setting sun of yesterday has kissed.
Is it the mem'ry of these days returned,
Or is it but the vision of a dream,
Whose impress on the mind had been unlearned
Till brightened by the music's quick'ning theme?

Or may it be transcendent memory
Of preëxistent life in faint rehearse,
As throbs the hidden chord of mystery
That binds the soul with all the universe
And pulses with the life divine
Beyond the spirit's mortal shrine,
Whene'er departing melodies of earth
In sombre symphony or mellow mirth
But touch in unison the vital note
Uniting distant worlds howe'er remote?
For e'en the soul that ne'er before gave sign
Of life or love, but slumbered on unknown,
Awakes one day within the thrall divine
Of some electric, sympathetic tone,
That fills the latent soul with life
To glow with wild, ecstatic strife,
As does the touch of nature's breath unfold
The hidden bud, though seeming dead and cold,
And brings to light in mystery combined
A life and beauty none had e'er divined.

Genesis.

EACH one was perched upon a box
And slowly swung his leg,
While trying to solve the riddle of
The chicken and the egg.
They reasoned and they argued it,
But neither one could say
Which was the first, the egg or chick,
Upon creation day.

"Because," said one, "without a hen
An egg there can not be;"
"But," t'other said, "it takes an egg
To make a hen, you see."
In vain they tried to reason it,
In vain they tried to guess,
Until another sitting by
In quiet thoughtfulness,
Said with innocent assurance,
While whittling on a peg,
"I 'll tell you fellows how it was:
I guess God laid the egg."

The Song of the River.

AS I stand by the stream in its murmuring flow
And watch the stray beams of the moon as they glow
And they glimmer and shimmer in ghostly array
On the turbulent water e'er rolling away,
While the night's palling breath, with its funeral moan
In the dole of a soul that is dying alone,
Chills my breast with a shud'ring, ineffable fear,
There comes a strange sound, a strange voice, to mine ear.
'Tis the voice of the river that calls to me there,
Enthrilling and filling my heart with despair;
Oh, the river is thralling and calling me near
With its music so dismal, so dread and so drear,
And this is the song that it murmurs to me
As it rolls o'er the shoals on its way to the sea:

'Come, oh, come from the world with its trouble and strife;
Cast into oblivion the bubble of life;
Float away on my breast to the ocean of sleep,
To the ocean so peaceful, so great and so deep,
That none ever wakes to the sorrows of earth,
But returns to the bliss from which taken by birth.
Ah! life's but a struggle from cradle to tomb,
A striving and driving through torment and gloom;
While man's but a creature of torture and pain,
Discerning, yet yearning for heaven in vain,
For the joy of a day is the sorrow of years
And the one happy smile is a fountain of tears—
E'er the greater the pleasure, the greater the woe
That follows the loss of the joy that must go.
Man is born but to die and the grave is his goal,
Whate'er his convictions concerning his soul,
Yet he battles and toils with the world and its hate,
E'er groping and hoping 'gainst pitiless fate,
And he labors and strives and he suffers and fears
'Mid the care and despair and the burden of years,
And the meed for his struggles, that end with his breath,
Is nothing, aye nothing, but infinite death!
Then, oh flee from this scene of malevolent gloom!
Why stay and delay the inex'rable doom?
Come, oh come to me now, to my welcome embrace
And my waters shall smother and cover thy face
And banish forever the phantom of life
With the chains and the pains of a merciless strife!''

So the river is calling and luring my soul,
While low like the flow knells the tremulous toll
Of the funeral bell far away in the lone—
The knelling and telling of life that has flown.
Aye, the river calls loudly, and madly and clear
Strange visions are becking and calling me near:
"Oh, come to me, come to me, come to my breast!"
"Aye, come to the river, the giver of rest!"
See! the waters are boiling and toiling to meet—
To meet me, to greet me and further entreat—
And the river is welling and swelling its deep
To grasp me and clasp me forever in sleep,
While lapping and purling and hurling it sings
And splashing and dashing it stealthily clings,
E'er palling, inthralling and calling to me
While whirling and swirling its way to the sea.

Easter Morning.

ENRAPTURED wakes the glad, expectant earth
Beneath the gentle kiss of nature's breath,
Whose melody proclaims the morning's birth
To whisper of the joy that follows death;
While silently the starlights disappear
Before the splendor of the coming morn,
That thrills the world with strange, ecstatic fear,
As unto her a marv'lous life is born.

For see! as hurling darkness from the skies,
The sun appears in fulgency sublime—
The Resurrection to ensymbolize,—
While earth and heaven in exultant chime
Peal forth in grand, antiphonal accord
Their anthem, "Hallelujah, praise the Lord!"

Simplicity.

ROUND the board in childish stare
He watched the guests with thoughtful face
Bow low their heads, as if in prayer,
To say their solemn, silent grace;
And folding then his little hands,
While meekly drooped his curly head,
He, too, as one who understands,
Spoke softly to himself and said:
"Now I lay me down to sleep—
I pray Thee, Lord, my soul to keep."

The Rose.

TO ——

THIS timid, silent, drooping rose,
With stinging thorn and nettle,
Doth tender love for thee enclose
Within each blushing petal.
Each tiny leaf's a thought of love,
For it, like each bright star above
And ev'ry blossom life hath wrought,
Is but divine, incarnate thought.

If thou couldst read the thoughts that dwell
Embodied in this flower
And know the love that they would tell
From beauty's fragrant bower,
Then wouldst thou learn the love supreme
Of one whose ev'ry thought and dream,
Of one whose ev'ry memory,
Is brightened by his love for thee.

Then would thy heart more clearly see,
In whispered truth revealing,
My heart-felt, fervid love for thee,
No longer now concealing;
And though the rose may fade and die,
Like some sweet maiden's gentle sigh,
Its soul of love shall live for thee
Forever to eternity.

But then, alas, to thee 'tis naught
Except a fading flower,
Forgotten like a passing thought
Within the passing hour.
Perchance, howe'er, the soul that glows
Within the bosom of the rose
May kiss thee ere it doth depart
And find its heaven in thy heart.

The Light Departed.

THE world's merry laugh and the sunbeams clear,
That ripple the infinite sea,
Are the echo sad and the shadows drear
Of a day that has gone from me;
For then we were four upon life's bright shore,—
To-night we are only three.

Fond memories come and memories go
Like the dreams of a troubled sleep—
Like the shadows wandering to and fro
On the sands of the ebbing neap,
And the forms unreal that silently steal
Through the gloom of the boundless deep.

The chilling winds moan 'mid the breakers' roar
And again through the mist I see
A life that goes out from the lives on shore
And hear a voice calling to me,
While slowly the light fades into the night
Far out o'er the infinite sea.

And never again will the light return—
The light of a life that has flown,—
Though the heart may call and the spirit yearn
For the soul that drifted alone
To the endless rest on the silent breast
Of the dark and the cold unknown.

While the lips may smile and the cheeks may glow,
As if the sad heart were free,
The joys of the days of the long ago
Will never come back to me;
For then we were four upon life's bright shore,—
To-night we are only three.

GERALDINE.

HEAR her dainty little feet
Pat'ring up and down the street,
Scamp'ring o'er the dusty way,
Tripping now in happy play,
Dancing to some childish song,
Hurrying now in haste along,
Skipping on the terrace green—
Lovely little Geraldine.

Eyes that flash with saucy mirth,
Shine like little stars on earth;
Rosy lips with sparkling pearls,
Nut-brown hair that seldom curls,
Dainty form and winning grace,
Sweet, aristocratic face;
Tout ensemble, little queen—
Lovely little Geraldine.

Tiny feet in slippers red,
Sunbeams smiling on her head,
As she trips sedately by
Seeming not to see me nigh,
Or, in bashful, artful play,
Looks and laughs and runs away;
Sweet coquette with childish mien—
Lovely little Geraldine.

And at night when all is still,
Save the crickets' dreamy trill,
Twinkling stars look down and peep
On a little form asleep,
Tired out with merry play,
Floating now in dreams away
To some distant fairy scene—
Lovely little Geraldine.

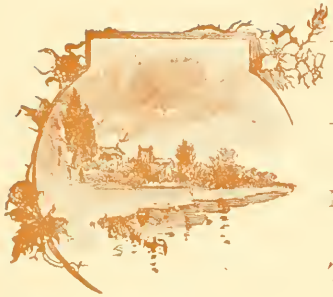
A Christmas Paean.

HARK! the chimes are revealing in rapturous pealing,
Their melody joyously flinging.
And the heavens instilling with music enthrilling,
As over the world they are ringing,
That Christmas, bright Christmas, gay Christmas is here
With the noise and the joys that forever endear
Its rollicking, frolicking pleasure and cheer,
With infinite nature rejoicing and singing;
While the rhyming and the chiming of the rhythmical ovation
In exultant peal and tinkle
With the lights' effulgent twinkle
Through the snow's demulcent sprinkle
Seem to mingle and to tingle in ecstatic jubilation!
Then let us shout merrily, happily, cheerily—
Set the glad echoes to ringing!
Away with all sorrow and thoughts of the morrow
And keep the gay, mellow bells swinging,
For Christmas, blithe Christmas, glad Christmas is here
To lighten and brighten the world with its cheer—
The happiest, jolliest day of the year,—
Forever true love and good fellowship bringing.

Nature's Alchemy.

THE flowers in divine array,
The wondrous plants of ev'ry source,
Live but to die and pass away
And leave to earth that mystic force
Wherein new kindred forms take birth
Enfolding that which is to be;
Thus nature glorifies the earth
Through her transcendent alchemy.

Une Chansonnette.



I SAW two silv'ry clouds, love,
Come sailing one by one,
As spirits soft that moved aloft
On t'ward the setting sun.
Methought in fancy's dream, love,
That they were you and I
Thus gliding on to love-land
Beyond the blushing sky.

Then floating side by side, love,
And ling'ring on the way
To greet the star that from afar
Stole forth to seal the day,
Still closer e'er they drew, love,
Until the day was done,
When fading into love-land
The two were only one.

The Christmas Rose.

WHEN birds and butterflies have fled
And leaves and flowers all are dead
And meadows sleep beneath the snow
And babbling brooks no longer flow,
Then comes the dainty Christmas rose.

Loved child of nature's tender care,
Fond, fragile, fragrant, frail and fair,
Enraptured wakes to smile and die
Beneath the winter's cruel sky—
So blooms the lovely Christmas rose.

The incarnation of a breath,
Sweet life communing with its death,
The timid kiss that winter stole
From blushing summer's fleeting soul—
This is the gentle Christmas rose.

Love's Nocturne.

'MID the shadows softly falling
Come the elfs of dreamland calling,
"Good night, good night,"—
Comes the tinkle, tinkle, tinkle
Of the distant, frosty bells
Faintly ringing, slowly swinging
As their melody impels,
"Good night, my love, good night;
All sorrows now take flight;
Then gently sleep in slumbers deep—
Good night, my love, good night."

Fairy melodies are stealing,
Gently, faintly, softly pealing,
"Good night, good night,"
While the tiny, tuneful tapping
Of the snow flakes on the pane
Speeds the napping with their rapping
To the lullaby refrain—
"Good night, my love, good night;
Until the morning light
Shall wake thy soul from dreamland's troll,
Good night, my love, good night."

The Daisy.

ALONE by a meadow a little white flower
Awakes from its sleep to peep forth from its bower;
'Tis only a daisy, which nature has told
To harbor the secret its death will unfold.

Beside the bright meadow a sad little maiden—
Sweet Gretchen—is passing, her heart heavy laden;
She spies the lone daisy and forward she springs
And plucking its petals she eagerly sings:

"Er liebt mich, ganz innig, von Herzen, mit Schmerzen,
Klein wenig, und gar nicht; er liebt mich, von Herzen!"
Dear Gretchen rejoices, her sorrows depart,
For the soul of the daisy now blooms in her heart.

A Reverie.

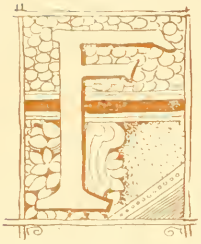
SORROWS come and sorrows go
Like the bleak, benumbing snow:
Falling thick and falling fast
'Mid the winter's chilling blast,
Seemingly as if to last
Forever and forever.

But beneath cold sorrow's strife
Lie the germs of hope and life,
That on winter's tears are fed,
And when sorrows' snows have fled
Springs the living from the dead—
Forever, thus forever.

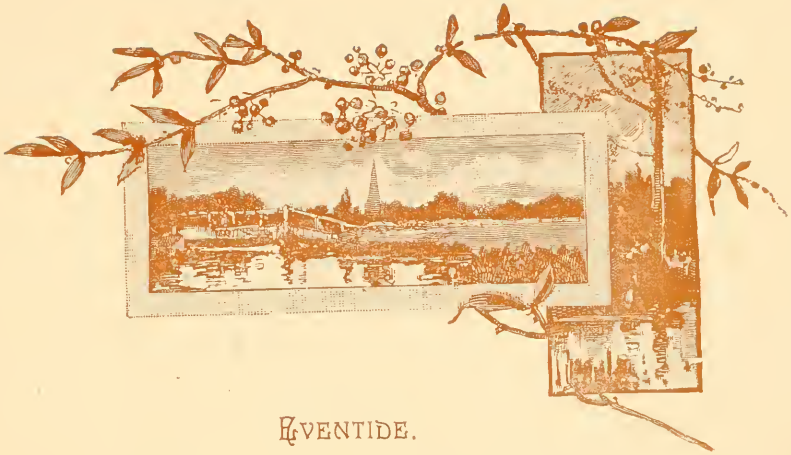
Under the Mistletoe.

NDER the mistletoe nestled above,
Under the mystical bower of love—
The refuge of Cupid, so cunningly stupid,—
She blushingly pauses to trifle with fate,
To linger a moment in fanciful bliss,
Then seeks to escape, but too late, ah, too late,
Love's treacherous portals are closed with a kiss—
Under the mistletoe, white-berry mistletoe,
Under the mistletoe, light, merry hearts aglow,
Under the mystical bower of love.

The Candle of Mortality.



AINTLY now, then brightly shining,
So it burns itself away,
Life and death in one combining
To produce the vital ray:
For while living it is dying
And in dying 't lives and glows;
Thus is death its life supplying,
Thus does life its death impose.
Without both there can not be
Aught but dull nonentity.



EVENTIDE.

DEPARTING sun has kissed the earth good night
And slowly fades the blush upon her face,
As one by one with pale and timid light
The silent stars peep forth from unknown space
To blossom in the meadows of the sky,
While o'er the world a dreamy stillness falls,
As nature in her subtle lullaby
All life in peaceful drowsiness enthralls.
Now fades the ling'ring twilight of the sun
And stealthy shadows softly now transume
The varied forms and colors into one
And hush the whisp'ring melodies in gloom;
Till over all there comes a silence deep
And gently falls the tranquil earth to sleep.

My Boy.

GIVE, oh, give me back my child! oh, give me back my boy!
That I might see his face again or but the thought enjoy
That he still lives and feels the love that binds him to this earth—
The greatest of all love sublime, the love that gave him birth!

It can not be, it can not be, that he is dead and gone,
When softly beamed the rosy light of manhood's happy dawn;
When life was but awak'ning to the joys and pleasures here,
With love and hope the morning star to guide his life's career!

Life of my life, soul of my soul, he was my light, my joy,
My pride, my love, my life, my all, my own, my darling boy!
Ah, vengeful fate! oh, monstrous death, to choose so rare a gem—
To pluck the fairest bud on earth and leave some withered stem!

Oh, tell me not in cheerful voice that all is for the best,
That it is better he should be forever now at rest,
That none should murmur 'gainst the will, the will of Him above,
Who thus in myst'ry manifests his never-ending love.

'Tis well for them who so believe—they know not what is grief;
No light has gone from out their lives to dim their cold belief;
But oh, what mock'ry 'tis to think, that to a mother's heart
Such words can consolation bring or comfort e'er impart!

A mother's heart, a mother's love can know no reason why
Her loved, her own, her precious child should thus be doomed to die.
It must not be, it can not be! oh, world bereft of joy!
Then give, oh, give me back my child! oh, give me back my boy!

Epithalamium.

'TWAS naught but a word—a lone whispered word,—
Which only one heart in the universe heard;
But it fastened the link, which naught can dissever,
Enclasping two souls in a union forever.

The Dream of Hope.

NCE upon a winter's night,
As I sat by firelight
Faintly napping, sadly musing
On the scenes of bygone days
Flitting by my dreamy gaze
One by one without my choosing,

And while gloomily I dozed
As I dreamily reposed
'Fore the embers slowly falling,
Suddenly I seemed to hear
Through the midnight still and drear
Some one strangely, softly calling.

'Round I looked with startled stare—
No one, nothing anywhere,
Save the darkness cold and palling;
But from out the dismal gloom
Came a voice as from the tomb
Sweetly, gently, faintly calling;

Came a voice that filled my soul,
Thrilled my heart beyond control
With its melody alluring ;
Came a voice that sang of joy,
Peace and bliss without alloy—
Perfect happiness inuring.

Moved as by some mystic might,
Groped I through the darksome night
T'ward this voice my soul enthralling:
But though seeming always near,
Ever from the distance blear
Came the magic music calling.

Out amid the howling blast,
Through the cheerless streets I pass'd,
Lured by wondrous strains impelling
Me to follow and to hope,
Though for ages I should grope
Through a grief beyond dispelling.

'Mid the winter's chilling blight,
'Mid the horrors of a night
Whose existence seemed eternal,
Onward, onward without rest
E'er unceasingly I press'd
With an energy infernal!

While the wails of spirits sad
And the yells of demons mad
  In the tempest wildly driving,
Seemed to pity and to mourn
And to ridicule and scorn
  My indomitable striving.

Following through valleys dark,
Mountains bleak and forests stark—
  So fantastically drearful,—
Groped my fascinated life
O'er the earth in frenzied strife,
  With its woes and terrors fearful,

Till amid the awful gloom
Of this everlasting tomb
  Came I to the ocean palling,
Where above its savage roar
Rose the voice as e'er before,
  Full distinctly, gently calling.

Then amid o'erwhelming fears
Came the voice in mocking jeers,
  Like some horrible deduction;
And the music died away
Leaving me in wild dismay
  On the brink of death's destruction.

Halloween.

O–NIGHT of all the nights throughout the year
Portends for thee thy future weal or woe;
To-night the oracles of fate draw near
To furnish to us mortals here below
One fleeting glimpse of that which is to be—
One glimpse behind to-morrow's sacred veil,—
If we but read aright the signs we see
And heed with care the witches' mirrored tale.
Then watch full well the embers' glowing mass,
List 'mid the churchyard's gloom for some fond name,
Note well the face that greets thee in the glass
And shrink not from the candle's magic flame,
And mayst thou read or hear or see or know
Naught but some future weal and naught of woe.

The Young Orpheus.

TO

THEO ALICE RUGGLES.

HEN in the twilight of the fading day
Sweet Orpheus entranced the blushing earth
And held enrapt her creatures 'neath his sway
With tristful symphony and tuneful mirth
And lulled the sea in mystic euphony,
There fell unheeded 'mid the list'ning throng
A melody of thought in whispered song—
A wayward offspring of the poet's soul,—
That on a passing zephyr faintly stole
Away, and wand'ring far 'twixt earth and star,
This scintillating spirit of a thought
For countless ages breathed in nature's dream
Beyond the touch of minds that vainly sought
The inspiration of its magic theme;
Until, as murm'ring mist it softly kiss'd
The list'ning soul of one whose mind
Conceived in harmony the thought enshrined
And gave incarnate to the world of art
The wondrous music of a poet's heart.

Dolly Belle.

DOWN the lane beside the meadow
Where the honeysuckle grows
With the daisies and the clover
And the lovely briar-rose,
While the violets are sleeping
'Neath the shadow of the dell,
Lived a little blue-eyed maiden
Known to me as Dolly Belle.

Oft I met her lightly tripping,
Tripping e'er in merry chase,
While the sunbeams through her tresses
Kissed her rosy, dimpled face,
And the posies of the meadow
Where her flitting footsteps fell
Nodded nods of nodding welcome
To their loving Dolly Belle.

And she took me to her garden,
To her garden down the lane,
Where the cheery little songsters
In a chirruping refrain
And the flowers by their blushes
Loving secrets try to tell
To their charming, dainty mistress,
Lovely little Dolly Belle.

There she sang to them in carols,
Caroling so sweet and clear,
That the gentle breath of heaven
Hushed its melody to hear.
Life was all a mellow summer,
All the world a quiet dell,
To this airy, fairy maiden,
Joyful, blithesome Dolly Belle.

"Come," I said, "and let us wander,
Wander far and far away,
Where the roses never wither
And the robins always stay"—
For I loved this little maiden
More than any words can tell,—
But the jealous soul of nature
Claimed my darling Dolly Belle.

Oft I wander o'er the meadow
As the daylight fades away,
As the sunbeams faintly tremble
On the edge of parting day,
And I wander by the garden
Where the birds and flowers dwell
Ever longing, ever waiting
For their angel Dolly Belle.

Misère.

A THANKSGIVING ELEGY.

SHE wandered in silence, she wandered alone
By the side of the darksome river,
And the lights from the town as they glimmered and shone
Told of pleasure departed forever—
Forever, forever—
Of hope that had parted forever.

Did she thank for the trouble, the struggle, the woe,
That made up her burden of living?
Ah, whom did she thank and for what did she thank
On the eve of this merry Thanksgiving?
Thanksgiving, Thanksgiving—
Oh, irony cruel—Thanksgiving!

She spurned her dead life for the peace, for the sleep
That beckoned to her from the river,
And the cold breath of night kissed her tomb in the deep
As it whispered of silence forever—
Forever, forever—
Of freedom from sorrow forever.

Charity.

HIS eye was dim and his body bent
With the burden of many years;
His clothes were odd and shabby and rent
And the object of mirth and jeers.

My heart went out to this good old man,
Decrepit, forlorn and dismayed,
With comfort ending where age began,
And I stopped to offer him aid.

"A pleasant day," quoth I, with a nod;
But his mind seemed wand'ring away.
I heeded not his behavior odd,
But repeated, "A pleasant day."

He looked at me with a mournful stare,
Yet answered me never a word.
Methought he was deaf and unaware
Of the music that others heard.

I smiled and bowed and pointed o'erhead
And shouted, "A pleasant day!"
"Well, who said it wasn't?" is all he said,
As he turned and trotted away.

Cloudland.

I'M standing by the gate, dear,
Where once we stood before
And listened to the rippling song
Of wavelets on the shore
And watched the gath'ring clouds, dear,
That o'er the mountain stole;
And read above on wings of love
The fortunes of our soul.

For then our hearts were one, dear,
Bound with a single thought—
To live and love and love and live
As only love had taught;
And so within the sky, dear,
In cloudland far away,
'Mid rosy beams we dreamed the dreams
Of love's long summer day.

We saw the snowy peaks, dear,
Of airy mountains high,
With fairy streams and cataracts,
That sparkled in the sky;
And by the emerald seas, dear,
We saw the castles bright,
Whose towers bold seemed made of gold
Amid the fading light.

Then saw we gardens fair, dear,
Where countless flowers grew,
While silv'ry streams seemed murmuring
Through fields of golden hue;
And music seemed to fall, dear,
In gentle, mellow spray,
As tinkling bells o'er fairy fells
In cloudland far away.

I see the clouds again, dear,
Kiss'd by the parting day,
But like the hopes and joys of life
They pass and melt away;
The mountains fade in mist, dear,
The crumbling castles fall,
While oceans grand and fairyland
Fast fade beyond recall.

And so they pass away, dear,
The dreams of life and love,
That for a moment hid from view
The endless night above;
And thus they are absorbed, dear,
Within the boundless sea,
Where life and thought and love are naught
E'en to eternity.

Nescience.

I AM waiting, I am waiting by the riverside alone
For the voice of one whose spirit like a dulcet breath has flown;
I am waiting, I am waiting by her lonely sepulcher,
Where the music of the forest breathes the requiem for her,
Where the waters of the river whisper ever from the deep
Of the infinite, perennial, impenetrable sleep,
While the antiphon of heaven knells the dirge of parted breath
And the stars in awful silence tell of everlasting death;
Still I'm waiting, oh, I'm waiting for a message from her soul
'Mid the music of the waters in their wierd, eternal dole.

I am waiting, I am waiting by the dark, sepulchral stream
In the fearful fascination of a melancholy dream,
As I yearn and ever hearken in a ponderable fear,
'Mid the purling of the river so mellifluously drear,
For a token from my loved one that the love of parted souls
Holds communion with the living and their destiny controls;
But the gurgle of the current in its dolorific flow
Is the only sound that answers through the darkness cold and low,
While I'm waiting, sadly dreaming, 'neath the stars' somnific stare,
By the tomb of my beloved in the anguish of despair.

Delitescent.

THE laughing brook, whose ripples gleam
In music through the field,
Enfolds within its gentle stream
Dark myst'ries unrevealed.

The tender flower, pure and fair—
A kiss of nature born,
Conceals beneath its blushes rare
The unknown deadly thorn.

The happy smile, the cheerful word
Are but the sparkling spray
O'er tears unseen and grief unheard
As flows life's stream away.

The rosy cheeks, the sunny days
Are but the blushes light
Concealing from the worldly gaze
The stinging thorn of night.

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